that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury to the domestic farmers. Towards that end, import duties on a number of items, where increases in imports were noticed, have already been increased. In the budget for the year 2000-2001, import duties on many of the agricultural items, (Chapter 1 to 24 of ITC(HS) Classifications of Export and Import Items, 1997-2002), have been increased to provide further protection to domestic farmers, e.g. duty on rice has been increased from 0% to upto 80%, on maize from 0% to 50%, on apples from 35% to 50%, on wheat raised to 50%. Similarly, in the budget for the year 2001-2002, the custom duty on coconut, copra, tea and coffee has been raised from 35% to 70%. The import duty on various refined edible oils excepting soyabean oil has been raised upto 85%. Similarly, the import duty on crude palmolein oil has been raised to 65% and on other crude edible oils excepting soyabean oil duty has been raised upto 75%.

Export of Rice

182. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether rice exports are likely to rise over one million tonnes by March 2002 due to a cut in export prices and increased demand from African countries;

(b) if so, whether due to the lack of other markets and quality concerns, exports have not risen as targeted by Government;

(c) if so, the total target set for exports; and

(d) to what extent it has been achieved so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) It is not possible to estimate the likely quantum and value of rice that will be exported by March 2002 as the exports would depend upon international demand and supply position, domestic demand and supply position, international and domestic prices, consumer preference and varieties traded.

(c) and (d)As per EXIM Policy, export of rice is free subject to registration of contracts with Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA). No specific target has been set for export of rice. The performance of agricultural products. For the year 2001-02, export of 3 million tonnes of rice has been permitted out of the stocks held by FCI for the Central Pool. As against this

the export of non-basmati rice for the period April-August, 2001 has been 2.48 lakh MT (prov.).

Incentives to Coffee Industry

183. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Wil the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state the incentives proposed to boost coffee cultivation and promote good stewardship in the coffee industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): For development of coffee a number of Plan schemes are being operated by the Coffee Board during the 9th Five Year Plan. The Government of India through the Coffee Board, besides operating seveal Plan schemes and developmental activities aimed at intensive cultivation, replanting programmes, quality imporvement programmes and water augmentation programmes, has also been providing necessary support in the form of agricultural research, extension, arrangement of credit and finance and other necessary backup support like supply of seed for planting purposes etc. Furthermore since the coffee industry is essentially an export-oriented industry, a medium-term strategy has been taken up for implementation comprising a number of initiatives both on the production fornt as well as the market front.

Impact of US-Afghan war on Indian exports

184. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Indian export-import market has suffered a major setback owing to the uncertainities of the US - Afghanistan War;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any new strategy to help exporters - importers in view of existing war situation;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the impact on foreign exchange earnings of the present war?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTERY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (d) India's export of merchandise goods during the period the April- Septemebr, 2001-02 was affected by the global economic slow down compounded by the uncertainities arising out of the terrorist attacks in USA and the US-Afghanistan war. India's export growth rate was 1.95% and import growth rate 1.81% during April-September